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The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Ike Wanted to Invite Russians to U. S.

By Drew Pearson

President Eisenhower would have invited Russian Premier Nikolai Bulganin and Defense Minister Georgi Zhukov to Washington during the Geneva talks, if Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had let him. It was definitely discussed and the Russians were itching to come—right away—but Dulles said no . . . Ike got



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frustrated at times at his Maggot-minded Secretary of State. Reason behind the current historic talks with the Chinese Reds was a repeated warning from Allen Dulles, head of Central Intelligence, that the Reds would begin a devastating bombardment of Quemoy-Matsu immediately after the Geneva conference. Ike decided it was better to talk than retreat . . . Hitherto any intimation that he would talk to the Chinese Reds without Chiang Kai-shek being represented has brought screams of anguish from the Knowland wing of the Republican Party. Its members are still irate but less vocal . . . State Department advisers have raised Cain with Chiang Kai-shek's trigger-happy public relations men who have published stories about Chinese Red planes piloted by Russians firing on Nationalist planes. A lot of these incidents didn't really happen, and the State Department is trying to tone down inflammatory news stories. You've seen a lot less of them lately.

Signs and Signals

Just before he was stricken with a heart seizure, friends of Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson of Texas planned to launch a presidential boom. The friends included Senators Richard Russell of Georgia, George H. Smathers of Florida, and Stuart Symington of Missouri. They were all set to make a public announcement when Johnson felt the effect of his grueling work and was carried to the hospital . . . Arrow-tongued Sen. Bob Kerr of Oklahoma, one of the few who took on Douglas MacArthur, is "willing" to take the Senate leadership if either Johnson or Earle Clements of Kentucky don't want it next year. (He's both willing and eager.)

The big news is that Alvin York of Tennessee, Estes Kefauver, has taken terrific strides to-

ward the Democratic nomination without exerting any noticeable effort. He's one of the few Democrats who know how to fire political shots like Sgt. Alvin York of Tennessee—to kill. And unlike some of his colleagues he's not afraid to fire.

Carmine de Sapio, head of Tammany and the political genius behind Gov. Averell Harriman, isn't wedded to Adlai Stevenson for the nomination as is his friend, Averell. De Sapio is for any good Democratic campaigner.

Republican leaders are now feeling much happier about prospects that Ike will run again. If they can keep him absorbed with international affairs and not worried about Talbottism or Dixon-Yatesism they figure he'll be ready and willing for '56.

George Bender, the singing Senator from Ohio, has got his signals crossed again. Usually he takes them from his good friend, Secretary George Humphrey, who comes from Bender's home town, Cleveland. But while Bender has been Air Force Secretary Harold E. Talbott's chief defender in the Senate, Humphrey has been Talbott's chief critic in the Cabinet . . . once before, Bender got his signals crossed on the St. Lawrence Seaway. After vigorously opposing it, he found that Humphrey was its chief pusher. So Bender switched pronto. After all, Humphrey has been his biggest campaign contributor.

Nixon Scores

Rumors persist that Vice President Richard M. Nixon won't run again, will retire voluntarily to practice law. All outward indications, however, are to the contrary. It was Nixon himself who sold Ike on letting him hold a Cabinet meeting in Ike's absence—a pure public relations stunt. Almost never are Cabinet meetings held by Vice Presidents, and never in the memory of Washington observers have pictures been taken of vice presidential sessions. But Nixon not only held a meeting but got a photo to prove it.

Nixon's public relations build-up last month was gall-and-wormwood to the other young man from California. Bill Knowland came down to the airport in the rain to welcome Ike home from Geneva, but didn't look happy at seeing Nixon in charge of welcoming Ike home. Knowland is expected to resign the Republican leadership of the

Senate if Mr. Eisenhower goes too far in dumping Chiang Kai-shek.

"Salty" Saltonstall, the Massachusetts blueblood, is already wig-wagging that he's ready to take over the GOP leadership if Knowland bolts . . . The GOP Senate Policy Committee

meeting behind closed doors last week voted that Secretary Talbott should be dumped. Bad political security risk . . . Soft-hearted Senator Symington hated to see Talbott on the griddle. Stuart is a friend of Talbott's wife and family.

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